

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 MMS-03 AF-10 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01

/159 W

----- 097085

R 141045Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 651

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 677

EO 115652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, CE, IO

SUBJ: REACTION TO DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION

REF: COLOMBO 504

1. THERE HAS BEEN ALMOST NO DIRECT CEYLONese COMMENT ON DIEGO GARCIA SINCE REFTel, ALTHOUGH PRESS HAS GIVEN PROMINENT PLAY TO NEGATIVE REACTIONS OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AS CARRIED BY WIRE SERVICES. THESE HAVE INCLUDED HEAVY PLAY TO INDIAN REACTION, TASS REPORT OF PRAVDA COMMENT, AND STATEMENTS BY OFFICIALS OF OTHER LITTORAL COUNTRIES WHO HAVE MENTIONED THAT SRI LANKA, AMONG OTHERS, OPPOSES PLANS. AT SAME TIME, OPPOSITION-

SUPPORTING "WEEKEND" HAD UNUSUALLY FAVORABLE ARTICLE MARCH 10 AND GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS AND RADIO HAVE CARRIED SOME WIRE SERVICE REPORTS ON EXECUTIVE BRANCH TESTIMONY BEFORE CONGRESS EXPLAINING US RATIONALE FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPANSION PLANS.

2. TO DATE NEGATIVE REACTION HERE HAS BEEN LIMITED AND
GOVERNMENT HAS AVOIDED ANY FURTHER COMMENT ON MATTER SINCE
FOREIGN MINISTRY COMMUNIQUE OF FEB 13 (COLOMBO
440 NOTAL) AND JAYAKODY REMARKS (REFTEL). FOOD SUPPLY
CRISIS IS ENGAGING GSL COMPLETELY. PRESSURES TO ISSUE
STATEMENT CONDEMNING DIEGO EXPANSION REPORTEDLY PERSIST
BOTH FROM SOVIETS AND FROM LEFTISTS WITHIN GOVT.
IN THIS CONNECTION IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE FOOD-SEEKING
MISSION TO MOSCOW (COLOMBO 652 NOTAL) MAY FIND PRESSURE
EXERTED ON GSL TO TAKE ANTI-WESTERN LINE ON DIEGO.
VAN HOLLEN

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Disposition Reason:
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30 JUN 2005

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